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PP RUEHLMC
DE RUEHLP #2764 2882044
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 152044Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5286
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 7141
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 4515
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 8412
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 5639
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2865
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 0636
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3061
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 3615
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4905
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5503
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0106
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/15/2017

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SUBJECT: BOLIVIA: MORALES RAISES THE RHETORIC

Classified By: Amb. Philip S. Goldberg for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) President Evo Morales, in a speech given to an indigenous gathering (attended by Guatemalan Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu) in the Chapare on October 12, continued to ratchet up his anti-American rhetoric. Morales opened the speech by yelling "long live coca, death to the Yankees" and having the crowd repeat it back three times so that "Ambassador Goldberg can hear us." Morales reiterated his call to move the United Nations outside of the United States and accused the USG of funding opposition groups through USAID. Morales also barred Ambassador Goldberg from the Presidential Palace, saying "if the ambassador of the United States does not apologize (for an ironic aside in response to the Bolivian Government's "campaign" to move the United Nations from the US) to the Bolivian people, to Evo Morales as president, then the ambassador does not step foot in the Palace and he is not a valid interlocutor." Morales reminded the crowd that many other presidents such as Castro, Chavez, and Kirschner support him and that "we are not alone, we are not interested in the United States." Evo said the airport in Chimore (Chapare) "was constructed by the United States to put an end to coca" but instead of achieving that objective, "they built an airport so that the president of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, the vice president of Cuba, Carlos Lage, and indigenous leaders from the world could arrive in Bolivia."

¶2. (U) Later that evening Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca told the press that relations with the U.S. would be conducted through diplomatic channels. A Radio Erbol (government aligned) report on October 15, however, stated that the MAS government and the Ministry of Foreign Relations are considering declaring Ambassador Goldberg "persona non grata."

¶3. (C) Comment: Morales' statements about the U.S. come several days after the Vice Foreign Minister and the Ambassador had "closed" the current diplomatic dispute between the GOB and the Embassy with a handshake, a public statement, and an exchange of diplomatic notes. The VFM had said several times that the agreement had the approval of Foreign Minister Choquehuanca. Moreover, the VFM had stated publicly that the Ambassador's explanations were adequate.

It is clear, however, that this did not satisfy Morales himself, who may be unaware -- and unconcerned -- that his Foreign Ministry decided to end the matter. End comment.
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